

# A Taste of Compassion

A publication of the Food Bank of South Jersey



## FINDING FOOD... FILLING LIVES



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# A Message From The President & CEO



## FOOD IN AND FOOD OUT

It's usually when I'm leading a tour. As I'm walking down the aisles, along the rows of food on the shelves, there is a fact that always jumps out at me: we turn everything over in our 40,000-square-foot warehouse every 30 days, and, during busy times, more often than that.

That's a lot of food delivered throughout South Jersey. In 2022, we sent nearly 18.5 million pounds of food out the door – another number at which I'm often amazed.

We've had to find food in so many ways. We couldn't do what we do without supporters who are collecting food at drives large and small – where every can makes a difference for a family in need. Or all the donors whose financial support helps us leverage our buying power to provide three meals for every dollar we raise.

Those resources help our dedicated food sourcing team find what's needed to feed South Jersey. And since our serve numbers have increased in recent months to more than 120,000 individuals, the team is constantly looking for innovative new ways to fill the shelves of our warehouse.

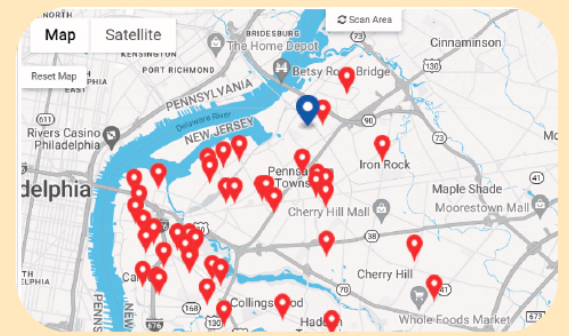
But when I think of finding food, it's not a stat or a fact that really sticks with me. It's the parent, grandparent, or guardian trying to find food for their family. Like Rowshon, who we recently met, who is raising her grandkids and had searched every way she could to find food for them so they wouldn't go hungry.

I'm thankful Rowshon found one of our 200 pantries that serve our neighbors in need. While she learned about our agency from her grandchildren's school, many others find food by using the zip code locator on our website, including those who are assisted by our mobile distributions because a pantry might not be nearby.

Finding food. Moving food. We are committed to always having enough food for South Jersey. And working hard to ensure that none of our neighbors go to bed hungry.

*Fred C. Wasiak*

Fred C. Wasiak  
President & CEO  
Food Bank of South Jersey



## HOW NEIGHBORS CAN FIND FOOD

Our food sourcing team does a phenomenal job locating and obtaining food for our pantry partners and direct distributions. So when someone in South Jersey is in need, they know where to turn.

The zip code locator on our website, [foodbanksj.org/food](https://www.foodbanksj.org/food), was designed to be an easy tool for neighbors to use to find food nearest them. When you visit the map on the site, you are prompted to enter your zip code or street address. The tool uses this to identify pantry partners near that location. The page also features our Pop-Up Pantries and Hope Mobile distribution dates, along with any known changes in those schedules.

Though not all pantries are open every day or even every week, with 200 partners throughout the region, there is almost always a friendly face and a helping hand to be found.





# FINDING FOOD... FILLING LIVES

In 2022, the Food Bank of South Jersey delivered more than **18 MILLION POUNDS** of food to our neighbors. That's about 1.5 million pounds of goods leaving FBSJ's care each month and heading out into Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, and Salem counties. Close to **10,000 TONS** of food for senior food boxes, Summer Meals for students, and everyday necessities for families left our warehouse in Pennsauken and went out into our 58 communities. And it all adds up to this: Last year, the Food Bank distributed a LOT of food.

But where does it all come from?

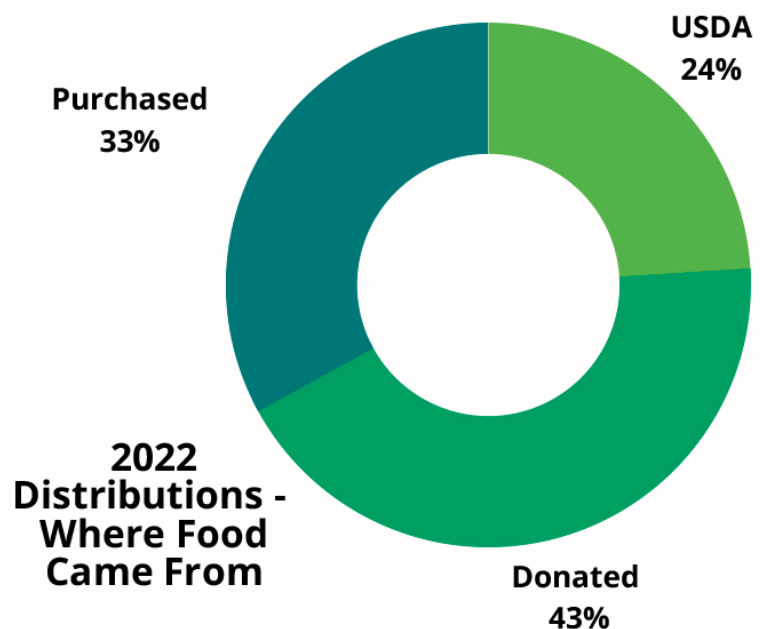
FBSJ's food sourcing team and a truckload (well, several, actually) of other partners.

Local, regional, and national government entities; community groups; large and small retail stores; schools and youth organizations; neighboring businesses; farming co-ops; and the list goes on. Ensuring our neighbors won't go to bed hungry is a tall order, but our team is ready to fill it.

## Donations

It probably won't come as a surprise that a lot of the food we distribute was donated to us. What may be surprising, however, is that last year we received about 250,000 pounds of high-quality food from HelloFresh and 1.5 million pounds from Target. Or that we work with groups like Farmers Against Hunger, Hunters Helping the Hungry, and local butchers to get donated produce and protein to agency partners. Or that once a week we receive a delivery of ready-to-eat meals and goods from Starbucks to be distributed to South Jersey residents in need.

There are also times when a pallet of food gets rejected from a store, even though it is in great condition, and FBSJ is able to step in. Thanks to incredible relationships throughout our communities, the Food Bank can ensure that food makes its way to our refrigerated space or to the shelf at one of our pantries.



Of course, we also take in what you might picture when you think of donated food, such as boxes of cereal from a local school or canned goods from a Boy Scouts food drive. In 2022, we received 178,788 pounds of non-perishable food from the National Association of Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger event, the largest one-day, nationwide food drive.

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## Purchased Food



But even with all our wonderful local and national partners, which are too many to list here, the Food Bank is purchasing more food than ever before. In 2022, we saw a 20-percent jump in pounds distributed from pre-pandemic times (2019), due to the increased need in our communities. More food-insecure neighbors means more food needs to be acquired, whether it's from distributors like Seashore Fruit & Produce or working with local farms and farmers.

Luckily, we are often able to utilize economies of scale to aid us in purchasing food for our agency partners and direct distributions. For example, we purchase frozen and shelf-stable foods almost exclusively by the truck load, and fresh items are bought weekly by the pallet. Because of our purchasing power, we can turn \$1 into three meals for our neighbors.



## United States Department of Agriculture

Each year, the United States Department of Agriculture and the New Jersey Department of Agriculture's food distribution programs provide millions of pounds of food items to agencies and feeding programs throughout the state. Beef and chicken, fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables, fish, dairy, grains, and other proteins are available through programs like The Emergency Food Assistance Program, which was designed to distribute federally donated food to eligible neighbors in need. Many of our pantry partners have TEFAP food available for those who qualify. Otherwise, there's usually other food items to choose from, which are purchased by the Food Bank or donated from another source.

## We Take Food Seriously

Much more time could spend diving into the world of food sourcing. There is a intricate dance performed in order to provide food to more than 120,000 individuals each month. Lots of time, energy, logistics, cooperation, and everything in between goes toward ensuring we can become a more sustainable and food-secure South Jersey.



### OUR MISSION:

The Food Bank of South Jersey exists to provide an immediate solution to the urgent problem of hunger by providing food to people in need, teaching them to eat nutritiously, and helping them to find sustainable ways to improve their lives.

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## STUDENTS JOINING THE FIGHT AGAINST HUNGER

The Food Bank of South Jersey is immensely lucky to serve a region whose children are so dedicated to serving their neighbors. In 2022, we received more than 10,000 pounds of food from our area's youth, as well as monetary donations that will help us feed our neighbors. From schools like George B. Fine Elementary School and Phifer Middle School right here in Pennsauken, to the Boy Scouts of America Garden State Council and their annual Scouting for Food event, and individuals like sisters Victoria and Olivia who hosted a bake sale to raise money for our programs, kids in our community are making a difference for their neighbors. And we are truly appreciative.



The Valentin sisters, Olivia (L) and Victoria (R), and family with FBSJ's Lavinia Awosanya